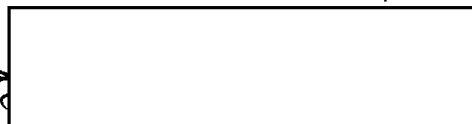2 May 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Special Intelligence Staff

SUBJECT   :   Proposed Intelligence Communications
                     Procedure

    1. The model intelligence communications system proposed
in the attached paper definitely would eliminate many of the
bottlenecks existent in the present methods and procedures of
preparing, encyphering and transmitting the thousands of classified
messages flowing in and out of Washington each day.

    2. I think, however, that rather than attempt to persuade,
cajole, influence or what have you, the other IAC Agencies to
accept a change so markedly different from present practices on
the basis of an untested proposal, a fairly extensive system
based on the proposed model be developed by this Agency and
given a good shakedown internally. Then and only then could we
go to the other Agencies with a good, sound proposal in the
form of a demonstrable, working mechanism, and probably be more
successful in extending the idea.

    3. Comments and queries from members of the Support Staff
are attached.

25X1

Chief, Support Staff

COMMENTS ON "INTELLIGENCE COMMUNICATION

AND RELATED PROCEDURE"

The thesis that intelligence information should be in the
hands of the analysts within twenty-four hours is undoubtedly sound.
Would the creation of a central communications system, however,
insure the receipt of the information by the exploiting analyst within
twenty-four hours? Big business seems to believe that over-centrali-
zation is self-defeating and that a certain amount of decentralization
leads to greater efficiency.

Is it not true that all intelligence information which may affect
the security of the United States is currently being received within
twenty-four hours. The development of better methods for producing
cotton in the USSR, for example, will undoubtedly affect the United
States, but it is not particularly important whether a long detailed
report on the subject is received today or next week.

High speed equipment for relaying intelligence information also
means high speed enciphering equipment. Assuming that the intelligence
information of most value from the standpoint of the security of the
United States would be collected in places near possible enemies, would
it be advisable to place such equipment where it might be subject to
capture in the event of the outbreak of hostilities?

Further, if it is seemingly impossible to obtain qualified personnel
to man the small telecommunications facility in OCI, would it ever be

possible to obtain personnel to man the communications facilities
envisaged in the plan in question since the problem would be
compounded many times.

It is stated that "reports would be punched on tape and the originator,
using an addressee handbook, would mark Washington distribution on
the report according to its subject."

Several questions arise in connection with this statement. First,
what is meant by an addressee handbook, that is, to what level in
Washington -- the IAC agencies, to working levels, or what? Second,
would marking the Washington distribution according to its subject be an
accurate criterion for determining the distribution within the Washington
area since the titles to reports currently received are written with
little precision and in many cases are misleading, bearing little relation
to the actual content of the document. If, as stated in paragraph 9
of subject paper "we are heavily dependent upon the judgment of people
in the field concerning the importance of specific items of informa-
tion" and if, as implied, their judgment is not always reliable in
judging the significance of an item, could the people in the field be
depended upon to indicate the Washington distribution if the distribution
is to be made to subordinate components of the IAC agencies.

It is also stated that one of the major themes on which the model
of an intelligence communication system is based is the "mechanizing and
simplifying information handling procedures at both ends of the communi-
cations system to permit major savings in the distribution time." In the
majority of the agencies, the distribution to analysts or to lower

echelons in the organization is made by reading panels using more
or less detailed reading requirements and symbol numbers to indicate
the recipients. Consideration could be given to the establishment of
a coding system to be applied to the documents in the field by qualified
personnel. The distribution to subordinate units in any agency could
be based on this coding system. It would seem to me that such a system
would be more effective than determining the distribution according to
the title of a particular document. There are certain objections to such
a system, but it seems that it would not be as haphazard as the suggestion
that "the message center could fill out distribution of the report when-
ever the field reporter had failed to indicate all of the distribution
needed."

A coding system has the disadvantage of being very rigid. In other
words, certain analysts may want material on a certain subject from some
source but not from others, or may want an overall coverage on a subject
and not a detailed report. A reading panel would probably be able to
screen material and give the analyst the material required in his parti-
cular problem.

The concept of a central communications system to send all
intelligence information to Washington seems to have advantages but it
would seem that some of the details should be studied more carefully.
Some of the disadvantages might well out-weigh the advantages.

The paper makes a good point in paragraph 11 -- and one w ich we all recognize -- that in an emergency the intelligence community should have its own communications system.

The paper raises in my mind some questions which I touch on briefly as follows;

1. Would the mailing of tapes be necessary under the model system? How secure would this practice be?

2. Could the ~~xxxx~~ lengthier reports be transmitted electrically? Does the three million words per day mentioned in paragraph 14 cover these documents, or would they still have to be pouched?

3. The model system emphasizes dissemination by the _field_ to the entire community. Is this desirable, or would it result in loose, excessive dissemination?

4. Would the uniformity of resulting format, as discussed in paragraph 15, be desirable: Form and appearance is often a _substantive_ factor. Furthermore, the format should function according the needs of each consumer.

The paper poses the basic question of what price we are willing to pay for the added timeliness. OK, now let's have a few figures on volumes, prices, speed.

dwv